IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A stirred tank for storing a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising a tank body having a substantially cylindrical shape with a bottom portion having an inverted cone shape, a jacket disposed on a periphery of the tank body within which a cooling medium is circulated so as to cool the yeast slurry, and a stirring impeller made up of vertically oriented surfaces with no ~~slant~~ main stirring surface that is slanted from vertical, having a shape and size varied in a vertical orientation, which variation ~~achieving~~ is configured to achieve vertical flow of the yeast slurry, and positioned within the tank body of the stirred tank and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

2. (Original) A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the maximum diameter of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 70-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank.

3. (Previously Presented) A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing beer including the process of storing in a stirred tank a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer

is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry from the stirred tank to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising:

providing a stirring impeller made up of vertically oriented surfaces with no ~~slant~~ main stirring surface that is slanted from vertical, having a shape and a size varied in a vertical orientation, which variation ~~achieving~~ is configured to achieve vertical flow of the yeast slurry, and positioned within a tank body of the stirred tank, said tank body having a substantially cylindrical shape with a bottom portion of an inverted cone shape, and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank, and a jacket disposed on a periphery of the tank body within which a cooling medium is circulated so as to cool the yeast slurry; and

stirring the yeast slurry by rotating the stirring impeller at a rotational speed of 1-30 rpm, while setting a concentration of the yeast slurry within the tank body to 30-60%.

5. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the maximum diameter of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 70-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank.

6. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A stirred tank according to claim 2, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

10. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 5, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the yeast slurry.

11. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 5, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

12. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 6, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

13. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 10, wherein the stirring impeller is rotated at a rotational speed of 1-20 rpm.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the stirring impeller has no hole or opening.

17. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the stirring impeller has no hole or opening.

18. (Currently Amended) A ~~stirred~~ tank ~~for storing a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry to the fermentation tanks for reuse,~~ comprising a tank body having a substantially cylindrical

shape with a bottom portion having an inverted cone shape, a jacket disposed on a periphery of the tank body within which a cooling medium is circulated ~~so as to cool the yeast slurry~~, and a stirring impeller including vertically flat surfaced paddle blades with no ~~slanting surfaces~~ main stirring surface that is slanted from vertical, the stirring impeller being positioned within the tank body ~~of the stirred tank~~ and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the ~~stirred~~ tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing beer including the process of storing in a stirred tank a part of yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning the part of yeast slurry from the stirred tank to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising:

providing a stirring impeller including vertically flat surfaced paddle blades with no ~~slanting~~ main stirring surface that is slanted from vertical, the stirring impeller being positioned within a tank body of the stirred tank, said tank body having a substantially cylindrical shape with a bottom portion of an inverted cone shape, and so constructed that a maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirred tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of a depth of the part of yeast slurry stored in the stirred tank, and a jacket disposed on a periphery of the tank body within which a cooling medium is circulated so as to cool the yeast slurry; and

stirring the yeast slurry by rotating the stirring impeller at a rational speed of 1-30

rpm, while setting a concentration of the yeast slurry within the tank body to 30-60%.

20. (New) A stirred tank according to claim 1, wherein the stirring impeller includes a rotational shaft, a first paddle blade, and a second paddle blade, wherein the first paddle blade and the second paddle blade are affixed to the rotational shaft, and wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at an angle offset from the second paddle blade.

21. (New) A stirred tank according to claim 20, wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at a horizontal elevation above the second paddle blade.

22. (New) A stirred tank according to claim 21, wherein a portion of the first paddle blade and a portion of the second paddle blade overlap each other in the horizontal elevation.

23. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 4, wherein the stirring impeller includes a rotational shaft, a first paddle blade, and a second paddle blade, wherein the first paddle blade and the second paddle blade are affixed to the rotational shaft, and wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at an angle offset from the second paddle blade.

24. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 23, wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at a horizontal elevation above the second paddle blade.

25. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 24, wherein a portion of the first paddle blade and a portion of the second paddle blade overlap each other in the horizontal elevation.

26. (New) A tank according to claim 18, wherein the stirring impeller includes a rotational shaft, a first paddle blade, and a second paddle blade, wherein the first paddle blade

and the second paddle blade are affixed to the rotational shaft, and wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at an angle offset from the second paddle blade.

27. (New) A tank according to claim 26, wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at a horizontal elevation above the second paddle blade.

28. (New) A tank according to claim 27, wherein a portion of the first paddle blade and a portion of the second paddle blade overlap each other in the horizontal elevation.

29. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 19, wherein the stirring impeller includes a rotational shaft, a first paddle blade, and a second paddle blade, wherein the first paddle blade and the second paddle blade are affixed to the rotational shaft, and wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at an angle offset from the second paddle blade.

30. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 29, wherein the first paddle blade is affixed to the rotational shaft at a horizontal elevation above the second paddle blade.

31. (New) A method of manufacturing beer according to claim 30, wherein a portion of the first paddle blade and a portion of the second paddle blade overlap each other in the horizontal elevation.